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An Examination of the Problem of the  
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# Newly Discovered Japanese Manuscript Copies of the *Liang Biographies of Eminent Monks* 梁高僧傳： An Examination of the Problem of the Text's Development based on a Comparison with Printed Editions\*

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## 1. Introduction

The *Liang Biographies of Eminent Monks* 梁高僧傳, compiled by Huijiao 慧皎 (497-554) is a record of the lives of prominent monks active during a roughly 450 year period from the introduction of Buddhism into China up to the Liang Dynasty. Together with the later *Further Biographies of Eminent Monks* 續高僧傳 by Daoxuan 道宣, it forms an invaluable resource for the study of Chinese Buddhism.

Progress made in the study of old Buddhist manuscripts in Japanese collections has brought to light manuscript versions of the *Liang Biographies of Eminent Monks* that differ in form and content from the printed (xylograph) canonical versions upon which we have conventionally relied. Here I would like to discuss the newly rediscovered Japanese manuscript versions of the *Liang Biographies*, and by focusing on the differences with the printed canonical versions and relying on the clues afforded by otherwise lost passages not seen in the printed versions, I will examine the implications of the manuscript texts for theories on how the *Biographies* developed.

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\* This article is a revision of a paper presented at the 'Ancient Japanese Manuscripts' panel at the 16<sup>th</sup> Congress of the International Association of Buddhist Studies, held at the Dharma Drum Buddhist College in Taiwan, 23 June, 2011.

## 2. Versions of the *Liang Biographies of Eminent Monks* in old Japanese manuscript collections

It is unclear how many manuscripts of *Liang Biographies of Eminent Monks* there are in old Japanese collections,<sup>1</sup> but surveys to date have uncovered the following three versions:

### (1) The Kongō-ji version

This manuscript is part of the Buddhist canon preserved at Amanosan Kongō-ji in Kawachinagano City, Osaka Prefecture. Postscripts in Fascicles 5 and 8 state that it was copied in 1133 (長承 2). Of the 14 fascicles, Fascicles 6, 9, and 14 are missing. The manuscript is ink on paper, in scroll form.<sup>2</sup>

### (2) The Nanatsu-dera version

This manuscript is part of the Buddhist canon at Nanatsu-dera in Ōsu, Naka-ku, Nagoya City, Aichi Prefecture. It was copied in the latter half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The postscripts in Fascicles 11 and 14 date it at 1177 (安元

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<sup>1</sup> According to the *Concordance of Eight Buddhist Manuscript Canons Extant in Japan* (International College for Postgraduate Buddhist Studies Academic Frontier Project, 2006), there are versions of the *Liang Biographies* in the Shōgozō Repository (ten fascicles in all; 13 extant), in Ishiyama-dera (ten fascicles in all; nine extant), Saihō-ji (14 fascicles in all; nine extant), Shingū-ji (14 fascicles in all; six extant), and the Matsuo-sha Canon (14 fascicles in all; three extant), in addition to the Kongō-ji, Nanatsu-dera, and Kōshō-ji versions I have taken up here. In addition, while I have not seen it, there is a version in Osaka's Shitennō-ji Canon (formerly in the Hōryū-ji Canon).

<sup>2</sup> For bibliographic information on the Kongō-ji version, see Toshinori Ochiai (Principle Investigator), *Kongō-ji Issai-kyō no Sōgō-teki Kenkyū to Kongō-ji Shōgyō no Kiso-teki Kenkyū* ("General research on the Kongō-ji Manuscript Canon and a basic survey of the Kongō-ji Sacred Texts", Research Report in two volumes for a Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research [A] for the 2003–2006 Academic Years: Research Project No. 15202002, 2007, p. 409f).

3). Of the 14 fascicles, Fascicle 3 is missing, and Fascicle 9 has yet to be identified. The manuscript is ink on paper, in scroll form.<sup>3</sup>

### (3) The Kōshō-ji version

This manuscript is part of the Buddhist canon at Kōshō-ji, located in Kamigyō-ku, Kyoto City, Kyoto Prefecture. The manuscript was copied during the Heian Period (circa 12<sup>th</sup> century).<sup>4</sup> All 14 fascicles are extant. The manuscript is ink on paper, in *orihon* format.

Although all three manuscript versions consist of 14 fascicles each, there are differences in content and internal divisions among them. Unlike the Kongō-ji and Nanatsu-dera versions, the Kōshō-ji version was most likely based on a ten-fascicle original. As Table 1 below shows, biographies related in Fascicles 10 through 13 in the Kōshō-ji version actually overlap with those presented from the first half of Fascicle 7, namely the biography of Qian Tuole 健陀勒, to the biography of Fajing 釋法鏡, which is the last one in Fascicle 9 of the same. As for the number of figures who have proper biographies in the manuscript versions, the Kōshō-ji version chronicles 254 if we exclude the overlapping biographies. The Kongō-ji and Nanatsu-dera versions both have missing scrolls, so we cannot arrive at accurate totals.

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<sup>3</sup> For bibliographic information on the Nanatsu-dera version, see Nanatsudera Issai-kyō Hozon-kai (eds.), *Nanatsudera Issai-kyō Mokuroku: Owari Shiryō*, 1968. For detailed information on the Nanatsu-dera Canon itself, see Toshinori Ochiai, “Nanatsudera Issai-kyō to Koitsu Kyōten” (“On the Rare Old Manuscripts in the Nanatsudera-issaikyō”), in *Nanatsudera Koitsu Kyōten Kenkyū Vol. 1. Chūgoku Senjutsu Kyōten* (Part 1), Daito Publishing Co., Feb. 1994, pp. 433–477. The catalogue above (*Mokuroku*) shows a record of the ninth scroll, but it has yet to be located.

<sup>4</sup> The Kōshō-ji version does not have a postscript indicating when it was copied, but a previous study dates the manuscript to the Heian Period (Kyoto Prefectural Board of Education [eds.], *Kōshō-ji Issai-kyō Chōsa Hōkokusho*, Mar. 1998, p. 281).

When we compare Fascicle 11 in the three versions, we see that the Kongō-ji and Kōshō-ji versions each have biographies of 34 people, while the Nanatsu-dera version only has biographies of 33. Because the Nanatsu-dera version has fewer biographies, it is possible that it preserves an older form of the text.

Table 1

Fascicle No.	Kongō-ji version		Nanatsu-dera version		Kōshō-ji version	
	Names of figures (first and last subjects of proper biographies)	No. of figures	Names of figures (first and last subjects of proper biographies)	No. of figures	Names of figures (first and last subjects of proper biographies)	No. of figures
一	攝摩騰…曇摩耶舍	15	攝摩騰…曇摩耶舍	15	攝摩騰…佛陀耶舍	20
二	鳩摩羅什…曇無讖	7	鳩摩羅什…曇無讖	7	佛駄跋陀羅…求那毘地	15
三	釋法顯…求那毘地	13	〈欠〉		朱士行…竺僧敷	18
四	朱士行…竺僧度	12	朱士行…竺僧度	12	釋曇翼…釋僧 (丰力)/石	17
五	釋道安…釋慧度	15	釋道安…釋慧度	15	釋道融…釋梵敏	27
六	〈欠〉		釋慧遠…釋僧肇	13	釋道温…釋曇斐	36
七	竺道生…釋慧通	32	竺道生…釋慧通	32	佛圖澄… <u>毘陀勒</u> …釋保誌	20
八	釋僧淵…釋曇斐	26	釋僧淵…釋曇斐	26	竺僧顯…釋曇弘	45
九	〈欠〉		未確認		釋曇邃… <u>釋法鏡</u>	56
十	捷陀勒…釋保誌	16	捷陀勒…釋保誌	16	<u>毘陀勒</u> …釋保誌	16
十一	竺僧顯…釋僧祐	<u>34</u>	竺僧顯…釋僧祐	<u>33</u>	竺僧顯…釋僧祐	<u>34</u>
十二	釋僧群…釋道琳	32	釋僧群…釋道琳	32	釋僧群…釋道琳	32
十三	竺慧達… <u>釋法鏡</u>	35	竺慧達… <u>釋法鏡</u>	35	竺慧達… <u>釋法鏡</u>	35

(Total : 237)

(Total : 236)

(Total : 371)

### 3. A comparison of the old manuscript versions with the Taishō version

It goes without saying that the texts of the *Liang Biographies of Eminent Monks* most conventionally relied upon have been the printed

versions contained in the Taishō and other xylograph canons. In the following I wish to examine the differences between the newly found manuscript versions of the *Liang Biographies* and the printed versions. Using the Taishō version for comparison, I have identified the following overall differences.

### (1) Discrepancies in the number of figures represented

The Taishō version comprises proper biographies of 257 subjects. If we compare this with the number of subjects of proper biographies in the manuscript versions above, we see that the Kongō-ji and Kōshō-ji versions are fewer by three figures each, while the Nanatsu-dera version is fewer by four (see Table 2). The “ancillary biographies” 附傳, i.e. mentions of people who are not counted among the “proper biographies” 本傳, total 244 both in the Taishō version and in each of the manuscript versions, but the people mentioned in them differ. For example, mention is made of a certain Daoshi 釋道施 at the end of the biography of Daoyi 釋道壹 in the manuscript versions, but he does not appear in the Taishō version. Conversely, the Taishō version mentions a monk called Facun 釋法存 at the end of the biography of Faguang 釋法光, but his name is absent from the manuscript versions.

Table 2

Fascicle No.	Taishō version	Kongō-ji version	Nanatsu-dera version	Kōshō-ji version
四	康法朗・竺法乘	×	×	×
八	釋僧遠	×	×	×
十一	釋道房	釋道房	×	釋道房

## (2) Discrepancies in the order of the biographies

The order of the biographies is the same in each of the manuscript versions. There are, however, differences in order between the Taishō version and the manuscripts in Japan, specifically in the order of the biographies in Fascicles 5 and 11 (see Table 3).

Table 3

Fascicle No.	Taishō version	Kongō-ji, Nanatsu-dera and Kōshō-ji version
五	釋道安・釋法和・ <span style="border: 1px solid black;">竺僧朗</span> ・竺法汰・釋僧先・竺僧輔・竺僧敷・釋曇翼・釋法遇・釋曇徽・釋道立・釋曇戒・竺法曠・釋道壹・釋慧虔	釋道安・釋法和・竺法汰・釋僧先・竺僧輔・竺僧敷・釋曇翼・釋法遇・釋曇徽・釋道立・釋曇戒・ <span style="border: 1px solid black;">竺僧朗</span> ・竺法曠・釋道壹・釋慧虔
十一	釋僧審・釋法悟	釋法悟・釋僧審

## (3) Differences in details conveyed in the biographies

The most noteworthy aspect when comparing the Japanese manuscripts and Taishō version is the degree to which the manuscript and printed versions diverge in content within the biographies of the same monks. Compared to the Taishō version, the level of expansion in Fascicle 5 and abridgement in Fascicle 8 are the most prominent (see Table 4).

Table 4

Taishō version		Kongō-ji version		Nanatsu-dera version		Kōshō-ji version	
Fascicle No.	Name of monk	Prominent feature		Prominent feature		Prominent feature	
一	安清		Abridged		Abridged		Abridged
一	帛尸梨蜜多羅				Abridged		
一	僧伽提婆	Expanded		Expanded		Expanded	

二	鳩摩羅什		Abridged		Abridged		Abridged
三	釋智嚴	Expanded				Expanded	
四	朱士行		Abridged		Abridged		Abridged
四	竺法義		Abridged		Abridged		Abridged
四	竺僧度		Abridged		Abridged		Abridged
五	釋道安	Expanded		Expanded		Expanded	
五	釋法和	Expanded		Expanded		Expanded	
五	釋曇翼	Expanded		Expanded		Expanded	
五	竺僧朗	Expanded		Expanded		Expanded	
五	釋道壹	Expanded		Expanded		Expanded	
七	釋僧苞		Abridged		Abridged		Abridged
七	釋僧導		Abridged		Abridged		Abridged
七	釋慧靜		Abridged		Abridged		Abridged
七	釋超進		Abridged		Abridged		Abridged
八	釋曇度		Abridged		Abridged		Abridged
八	釋道慧		Abridged		Abridged		Abridged
八	釋法瑗		Abridged		Abridged		Abridged
八	釋僧柔		Abridged		Abridged		Abridged
八	釋慧球		Abridged		Abridged		Abridged
八	釋寶亮		Abridged		Abridged		Abridged
八	釋慧集		Abridged		Abridged		Abridged
十二	釋法光		Abridged		Abridged		Abridged
十二	釋弘明		Abridged		Abridged		Abridged
十三	釋法獻		Abridged		Abridged		Abridged
十三	釋法悅		Abridged		Abridged		Abridge

One can conclude from the differences shown in the table above that the old manuscripts in Japanese collections belong to a separate textual tradition from the one represented by the Taishō and similar printed versions. The differences between the two represent a major challenge when studying the *Liang Biographies of Eminent Monks*.



#### 4. The issue of the development of the *Liang Biographies* in view of the Japanese manuscripts

The most significant of the issues encountered in researching the *Liang Biographies of Eminent Monks* based on the rediscovered Japanese manuscript versions are those that address the questions of how the biographies developed and how the text evolved. I cannot go into all of those issues here, but after exploring the sources of the textual tradition to which the Japanese manuscripts belong and studying features of the text not seen in the Taishō and other such xylograph versions, I would like to present several new findings concerning the development of the *Liang Biographies*.

##### (1) Sources of the textual tradition represented by the Japanese manuscripts

Because the old Japanese Buddhist manuscripts I have brought up here were copied in or around the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, we must inquire into the reliability of the content that differs from the printed canonical traditions, and find out just how closely these manuscript versions reflect the texts from mainland China on which they were based. Elsewhere I have addressed issues concerning certain words adopted in Huilin's 慧琳 *Yin-yi* 音義 (from the early 9<sup>th</sup> century) dictionary.<sup>5</sup> Based on that study, of the 28 words quoted in *Yin-yi* from Fascicle 5 of the *Liang Biographies of Eminent Monk*, there are four words that do not appear in the Taishō or other printed versions, but occur in all the Japanese manuscripts: (閭風), (輟哺), (懷然) and (龍驤).

Even before Huilin's work, Zhisheng's 智昇 *Kaiyuan Shijiao-lu* 開元釋

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<sup>5</sup> DingYuan (Zhaoguo Wang), "Some thoughts on versions of *Biographies of Eminent Monks* that rely on Huilin's *Yin-yi*", an oral presentation (unpublished) given at the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Forum of Buddhist Sutras Sounds and Meanings [sic], Shanghai Normal University, September 2010.

教錄 relays in Fascicle 6 a biography of Huijiao, from which we can verify that the version of the *Biographie* circulated in Changan, which is part of the same stemma as the old manuscripts in Japanese collections, at the very least predates the corresponding catalogue that was produced in 730 (Kaiyuan 18). As shown in Table 5 below, the passage quoted in the *Kaiyuan Shijiao-lu* (underlined below) appears in the Nanatsu-dera version. Hence, we can safely assume that the text Zhisheng was using belongs to the same tradition as the Nanatsu-dera version.

Zhisheng and Huilin were both active in Changan, which was the center of Tang-era Buddhism. They were also extremely well versed in the studies of biographies and semantics. The fact that the *Liang Biographies of Eminent Monks* that two scholars saw is of the same stemma as the old Buddhist manuscripts of this work in Japanese collections corroborates the notion that these Japanese manuscripts were copied from “orthodox” Chinese sources.

Table 5 (Missing from the Kongō-ji version)

<i>Kaiyuan Shijiao-lu</i>	Nanatsu-dera version	Kōshō-ji, Taishō version
前代所撰、多曰名僧。竊謂名之與高如有優劣、至若實行潛光則高而不名 <sup>6</sup> 。	前代所撰、多曰名僧、竊謂名之與高如有優劣、至若實行潛光則高而不名。	自前代所撰、多曰名僧。然名者本實之實也、若實行潛光則高而不名。

## (2) Issues related to the development of the *Liang Biographies*

The newly rediscovered Japanese manuscripts of the *Liang Biographies* require that we revisit the issue of how the *Biographies* developed. One study that addressed the issue of development in relation to Japanese manuscript versions is Tairyō Makita’s “Ishiyamadera Manuscript of the

<sup>6</sup> The same passage is present in Fascicle 9 of *Zhenyuan xinding shijiao mulu* 貞元新定釋教目錄 (T55, p.837a) by Yuanzhao. It is clear from the relevant passage that it is taken from the *Kaiyuan shijiao mulu* 開元釋教錄.

Liang Biographies”.<sup>7</sup> Makita’s study outlines the Ishiyama-dera manuscript (mid-12<sup>th</sup> century), and then analyzes the biography of Daoan, in which the most differences among the various versions are seen. His study concludes that the expanded portions seen in the biography of Daoan are also seen in the *JinShu* 晉書 (646) by Fang Xuanling (579–648) and others, which seems to suggest that the Japanese stemma of *Liang Biographies* had roots in the *JinShu* but was added upon later. If we give this hypothesis credence, the possibility follows that the old manuscripts in Japan were subject to subsequent alterations and therefore do not well reflect the original form of the text.

It should be noted, however, that we not only have the *JinShu* as a source for expanded biography of Daoan seen in the Japanese manuscripts, we also have passages quoted from the “Yu Shi Daoan-shu” 與釋道安書 in the 12<sup>th</sup> fascicle of the *Hongming-ji* 弘明集 (6th century).<sup>8</sup> This “Yu Shi

<sup>7</sup> Tairyō Iwai (Makita), “Ishiyamadera Ryō Kōsō-den to sono Dōan-den Kōi” (“Ishiyamadera Manuscript of the Liang Biographies”), in *Shina Bukkyō Shigaku* (*Journal of the History of Chinese Buddhism*), Vol. 2-2, 1938.

<sup>8</sup> The passage in the Japanese manuscripts, which is nearly identical to a passage in the “Yu Shi Daoan-shu”, is as follows: “夫不終朝而雨六和者、彌天之雲也。弘淵源以潤八極者、四海之流也。彼直無為、降而萬物賴甚（其）潤。此本無心、行而高下蒙其澤。況大哀降步、愍時而生。乘不疾之輿、以涉無遠之路。命外身之駕、以應十方之求。豈可玉潤於一山、氷結於一谷。望閭風而弗廻、捐此世而不度。自大教東流、四百餘祀。雖蕃王、居士、時有奉者、而真丹宿川先行上世、道運時遷、俗未僉悟。肅祖明皇帝、實天降德、始欽斯義、手書如來、暢乎無外。大塊既唱、萬竅俱怒。豪賢君子、靡不歸宗。日月雖遠、光影彌著。道業之隆、莫盛於此。豈所謂月光首寂、將生真地。靈鉢東遷、忽驗於是乎。此方諸僧、咸有思慕。目欣金色之瑞、耳遲無上之藏。繫詠之情、非常言也。若慶雲東徂、摩尼迴曜、一躡七寶之座、覽觀明哲之燈。雨甘露於豐草、植栴檀於江湄。則如來之教、復崇於今日。玄波溢漾、重蕩於一代矣。不勝延豫、裁書致心意之蘊積、曷云能暢。”

The corresponding passage in the Taishō version is as follows: “承應真履正、明白內融。慈訓兼照、道俗齊蔭。自大教東流、四百餘年。雖蕃王、居士、時有奉者、而真丹宿川先行上世。道運時遷、俗未僉悟。自頃道業之隆、咸無以匹。所謂月光將出、靈鉢應降。法師任當洪範、化洽幽深。此方諸僧、咸有思慕。若慶雲東徂、摩尼迴曜。

Daoan-shu” is actually a letter dated 365 (Xingning 3, fourth month) from Xi Zaochi 習鑿齒 to Daoan. The expanded portion of the biography of Daoan is nearly identical to the letter. Rather than the expanded portion being an addition by later redactors, it is more likely that the letter was used as source material by Huijiao (see Table 6).

Table 6

Kongō-ji, Nanatsu-dera and Kōshō-ji version 「竺僧朗傳」 (The following is not present in the Taishō version)	<i>JinShu</i>
<p>今滑臺失據、游軍靡託、雖群策紛紜、而冥闇莫訣。法師含靈四表、道合自然、故遣將軍蘇撫諮訣、衆議卜世、定鼎敬聽、誠告。朗答曰、「貧道山栖絕俗之士、豈與聞朝議、但有待之累、非有託無、以立檀越今來耶。貧道絕主、敬覽三策、繙尚書之議、可謂興邦之術矣。歲初長星、起於奎婁、遂掃虛危。虛危齊之分野、除舊布新之象、宜先定舊魯、巡撫琅邪、待(待)秋風戒節、然後北轉臨齊、天之道也」。撫又問(問)之以年世、朗曰、「燕襄庚成」。撫曰、「幾年」。朗曰、「年則一紀、世則及子」。撫曰、「何其促乎」。朗曰、「天時使然、豈開(關)人事」。撫秘不敢言。德得朗書大悅、事事從之。</p>	<p>德猶豫未決、沙門朗公、素知占候、德因訪其所適、朗曰、「<u>敬覽三策、繙尚書之議、可謂興邦之術矣。今歲初、長星起於奎婁、遂掃虛危。而虛危齊之分野、除舊布新之象、宜先定舊魯、巡撫琅邪、待秋風戒節、然後北轉臨齊、天之道也</u>」。德大悅、引師而南<sup>9</sup>。</p>

In addition to the biography of Daoan, there are added passages in the biographies of Fahe 釋法和 and Zhu Senglang 竺僧朗 that are not present in the Taishō version, with a particularly long addition in the latter biography. If we look at the biography of Zhu Senglang, for example, we

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一躡七寶之座、暫現明哲之燈。雨甘露於豐草、植栴檀於江湄。則如來之教、復崇於今日。玄波溢漾、重盪於一代矣。文多不悉載。” The phrase “文多不悉載” at the end makes it clear that the Taishō version represents an intentional abridgement of the source.

<sup>9</sup> From “Murong De” (慕容德), Fascicle 127 in *Jin Shu*, Zhonghua Book Company, Nov. 1974, p. 31-55.

find that part of the added passage also occurs in the *Jin Shu*. A comparison of the two leads me to conclude that it is the *Liang Biographies* that is being quoted in the *Jin Shu*, and not the other way around (see Table 6).

It should also be noted that in the introduction of the *Liang Biographies* it is stated that the biographies cover a 453-year period, spanning from 67 C.E. (永平 10, during the reign of Emperor Ming of Han) to 519 (天監 18).<sup>10</sup> Despite this, in the biography of Faxian 釋法獻 in Fascicle 13, the work chronicles events in 522 (普通 3), which postdates 519 by three years. Interestingly enough, there are substantial differences in the biography of FaXian between the Japanese manuscripts and the Taishō version (see Table 7). The differences between the two suggest the possibility that the Japanese manuscripts may preserve a form that is older than the Taishō version.

Table 7

Kongō-ji, Nanatsu-dera and Kōshō-ji version 「釋法獻傳」	Taishō version 「釋法獻傳」
皆在上定林寺、可（牙）以普通三年、為劫所取、今亡焉。	皆在上定林寺、牙以普通三年正月、忽有數人並執仗、初夜扣門稱、臨川殿下奴叛、有人告云、「在佛牙閣上、請開閣檢視」。寺司即隨語開閣、主師至佛牙座前、開函取牙、作禮三拜、以錦手巾盛牙、繞山東而去、至今竟不測所在。

The differences between the Japanese manuscripts and the Taishō version shown in the examples above show either that Huijiao himself made revisions to the text, or that the text was revised by later redactors in

<sup>10</sup> Note the following in Fascicle 14 of the *Liang Biographies*: “始於漢明帝永平十年、終至梁天監十八年、凡四百五十三載、二百五十七人、又傍出附見者二百餘人” (T50, p.418c).

the transmission process. The passage at the end of the introduction of the Nanatsu-dera version, which differs from corresponding passage in the Taishō version, perhaps sheds the most light on this major question (see Table 8).

Table 8 (Missing from the Kongō-ji version)

Nanatsu-dera version	Kōshō-ji, Taishō version
初草創未成、有好事之家、或以（已）竊寫、而卷軸開合、類例相從、未盡周悉。今最後一本有十三卷、備其讚論、意以為定、如來（未）隱括、覽者詳焉。	其間草創或有遺逸、今此一十四卷、備贊論者意以為定、如未隱括、覽者詳焉。

There are two points in particular that we should take note of when examining the different accounts above. First, while the Taishō version states “其間草創或有遺逸” (“The draft written during that period may contain omissions”), the Nanatsu-dera version says “初草創未成、有好事之家、或以（已）竊寫、而卷軸開合、類例相從、未盡周悉” (“Early on, before the draft had yet to be completed, it was secretly copied by curious persons, so the divisions of the scrolls and classification by content are not yet thorough”). Next is the fact that the Taishō version states “今此一十四卷”, though the Nanatsu-dera version has “最後一本有十三卷”. In other words, the Nanatsu-dera version tells us that even while the first draft of the *Liang Biographies of Eminent Monks* was being written—before the catalogue for the final fascicle was included—it had been copied, which suggests the possibility that during the development stages of the text, it went through a process of transition, from a first draft through further, reworked drafts.

## 5. Conclusion

The conclusions drawn from the examination above can be summarized with the three following observations:

(1) Of the three manuscripts from old Japanese collections that I have taken up here, the Kōshō-ji version comprises 14 fascicles in its current form, but it is actually based on a ten-fascicle text. In addition, it is quite possible that the Nanatsu-dera version represents a form of the text that is older than the Kongō-ji and Kōshō-ji versions.

(2) Although it cannot be said with certainty that the Kongō-ji, Nanatsu-dera, and Kōshō-ji versions belong to the same manuscript stemma, the three texts agree in terms of the number of people chronicled and the order and content of the biographies. In these respects the manuscripts show significant differences from the Taishō version. Particular note should be taken of differences in content when studying the *Liang Biographies of Eminent Monks*, and especially when examining issues related to how the *Biographies* developed.

(3) The otherwise lost passages not seen in the printed versions present in the Japanese manuscript versions that are not seen in the xylograph Taishō version likely do not represent additions by later authors. The stronger possibility is that they were additions made by Huijiao himself in the process of compiling and reediting the text, and that the Japanese manuscript versions reflect an early draft of the *Liang Biographies*.

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